GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:517
ANSWERED ON:23.07.2003
DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL HUB/MEDICAL TOURIST CENTRE
DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether medical treatments like heart operation etc. are cheaper in India in comparison to the developed countries;

(b) if so, whether the Government have any proposal for the development of any `Medical Tourist` Center/Medical Hub in the country;

(c) whether the Government have received any representations or suggestions in this regard from Hospital Associations, finance experts and medical experts;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Ministries like Commerce and Industry, Finance, Chemical and Fertilizers have been associated to coordinate in this regard; and

(f) if so, the concrete action taken/being taken by the Government thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) to (f): The Government is aware that certain hospitals in India are offering quality medical care in areas such as Cardiac Surgery, Ophthalmology etc. at a fraction of the cost incurred in developed countries. A report commissioned by the Confederation of Indian Industry in association with M/s Mckinsey has outlined the great potential for medical tourism in India due to a strong value proposition on cost, quality and services.

It is the endeavour of the Government to provide quality medical care to all citizens and also to promote the use of quality facilities for treatment of needy patients from other countries. For this purpose, India is one of the few countries to have given a commitment for allowing foreign investments in the hospital sector with a cap on foreign equity to the extent of 51%. Foreign equity investment of upto 100% is allowed with FIPB clearance in the Hospital Sector. A new scheme has been introduced the new EXIM policy which provides for duty free imports equivalent to 10% of average foreign exchange earning in preceding three years by health service providers.